

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7247

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 04313

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, GW, WB, FR, US, UK

SUBJECT: MEETINGS OF BUNDESTAG COUNCIL OF ELDERS AND
PRESIDIUM IN BERLIN

REFS: (A) BONN 3356; (B) BONN 3349; (C) BONN 3283;

(D) BONN 3265

BEGIN SUMMARY: DURING MARCH 11 BUNDESTAG QUESTION
HOUR, FOREIGN OFFICE MINISTER OF STATE WISCHNEWSKI
ANSWERED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S
ATTITUDE TOWARD MEETINGS IN BERLIN OF THE COUNCIL OF
ELDERS AND PRESIDIUM OF THE BUNDESTAG. WISCHNEWSKI
TOOK THE LINE THAT THE FRG WAS NOT A SIGNATORY OF THE
QA AND, HENCE, COULD NOT COMMENT AUTHORITATIVELY ON IT,
BUT THAT THE FRG WORKED IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH THE
ALLIES ON BERLIN MATTERS. WHILE SOME PRESS ACCOUNTS
HAD WISCHNEWSKI ATTRIBUTING THE ADVICE AGAINST MEETINGS
IN BERLIN TO THE THREE ALLIES, HE IN FACT CAREFULLY
AVOIDED A FLAT STATEMENT TO THAT EFFECT. RATHER, HE
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USED THE PASSIVE VOICE TO STATE THAT ADVICE AGAINST

SUCH MEETINGS AT THE PRESENT TIME "WAS GIVEN," DECLINING TO ELABORATE ON GROUNDS THAT DISCUSSIONS WITHIN THE BONN GROUP WERE CONFIDENTIAL.

IN MAKING IT CLEAR THAT THE THREE ALLIES HAD MISGIVINGS ABOUT SUCH MEETINGS IN BERLIN AND IMPLYING THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHARED THE ALLIED VIEW, WISCHNEWSKI HAS HOPEFULLY MANAGED TO REMOVE THE QUESTION AS A POSSIBLE ELECTION ISSUE.

AN INFORMAL EMBASSY TRANSLATION OF THE BUNDESTAG TRANSCRIPT FOLLOWS. END SUMMARY.

BEGIN TEXT (UNCLASSIFIED):

1. QUESTION 101 BY DEPUTY DR. KUNZ (WEIDEN), CDU/CSU: IS IT CORRECT THAT, WITH REFERENCE TO RESERVATIONS AGAINST A MEETING OF THE PRESIDUM AND COUNCIL OF ELDERS OF THE BUNDESTAG IN ITS BERLIN SEAT (AMTSSITZ), A SPOKESMAN OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SAID THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT INTERPRET THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT ON BERLIN, AND, IF THIS REPORT IS CORRECT, HOW DOES THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RECONCILE THIS ATTITUDE WITH THE STATEMENT IN THE COMMUNIQUE IT PUBLISHED TOGETHER WITH THE CHIEF OF THE CPSU ON THE OCCASION OF THE LATTER'S VISIT TO BONN STRICTLY TO OBSERVE AND FULLY TO IMPLEMENT THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT ON BERLIN?

REPLY (WISCHNEWSKI, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE): IT IS CORRECT THAT THE DEPUTY GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DOES NOT INTERPRET THE QA ON BERLIN. THIS IS IN LINE WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S VIEW THAT THE INTERPRETATION OF THE QA IS PRIMARILY UP TO THE SIGNATORY POWERS, THAT IS, ON THE WESTERN SIDE, TO FRANCE, GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES. IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT THE QA CONTAINS NUMEROUS PROVISIONS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WHICH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COOPERATES. IN THIS CONTEXT, I PARTICULARLY REFER TO ANNEX II ON THE TIES
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BETWEEN BERLIN AND THE FEDERATION AND TO ANNEX IV ON THE REPRESENTATION OF BERLIN ABROAD. IN ALL FIELDS CONCERNING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, IT STRICTLY OBSERVES AND FULLY IMPIEMENTS THE QA, ACTING IN CLOSE COORDINATION WITH THE THREE POWERS IN ALL QUESTIONS CONCERNING THEIR SPECIAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

2. ADDITIONAL QUESTION BY DEPUTY KUNZ: MR. MINISTER

OF STATE, HOW CAN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CONFIRM AN AGREEMENT CONCERNING THE STRICT OBSERVANCE AND FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE QA ON BERLIN IF IT HAS NO PRECISE AND CONCRETE IDEA AS TO WHAT RIGHTS ARE GRANTED WHOM AND TO WHAT EXTENT?

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REPLY (WISCHNEWSKI): THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS, OF COURSE, VERY CONCRETE IDEAS ON ALL MATTERS CONCERNING BERLIN.

3. SECOND ADDITIONAL QUESTION BY DEPUTY KUNZ: IN FORMULATING THE COMMUNIQUE ON THE VISIT TO BONN OF SOVIET PARTY CHIEF BREZHNEV, WAS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF THE OPINION THAT THE PRESIDUM AND COUNCIL OF ELDERS OF THE BUNDESTAG MAY MEET IN THE REICHSTAG, OR DID IT NEGLECT THINKING ABOUT THIS SPECIAL MATTER?

REPLY (WISCHNEWSKI): I THINK ONE HAS TO PROCEED FROM THE FACT THAT THE QA REFERS EXPLICITLY TO MEETINGS OF BUNDESTAG COMMITTEES AND PARTY GROUPS (FRAKTIONEN).

4. QUESTION 102 (ALSO BY DEPUTY KUNZ): IS IT THE VIEW OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT THAT A MEETING OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESIDIUM AND COUNCIL OF ELDERS OF THE BUNDESTAG IN ITS BERLIN SEAT WOULD EXCEED THE LIMIT OF A FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE QA AND, IF THIS IS NOT THE CASE, DID THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ENERGETICALLY STATE ITS VIEW IN ITS CONTACTS WITH THE WESTERN PROTECTING POWERS?

REPLY (WISCHNEWSKI): AS FAR AS THE ACTIVITIES OF THE GERMAN BUNDESTAG IN BERLIN (WEST) ARE CONCERNED, FOR QUITE SOME TIME THERE HAVE BEEN NO MORE PROBLEMS. THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEES AND FRAKTIONEN PROCEEDS WITHOUT FRICTION. THE QA PROVED VALUABLE IN THIS RESPECT. IT IS IN OUR JOINT INTEREST NOT TO ENDANGER THIS GOOD STATE OF USEFUL BERLIN POLICY. AS YOU KNOW, THERE IS, HOWEVER, A CONTINUING DISPUTE WITH THE SOVIET UNION ON THE INTERPRETATION OF THE QA AS FAR AS THE TIES BETWEEN BERLIN (WEST) AND THE FEDERATION ARE CONCERNED, WHEREBY THE POSITION OF THE THREE POWERS AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS MARKED BY THEIR DETERMINATION STRICTLY TO OBSERVE AND FULLY TO IMPLEMENT THE QA.

IN DEALING WITH THE QUESTION OF MEETINGS IN BERLIN OF THE COUNCIL OF ELDERS, THE FACT HAS TO BE CONSIDERED THAT THE QA EXPLICITLY REFERS ONLY TO MEETINGS OF BUNDESTAG COMMITTEES AND FRAKTIONEN. THE THREE POWERS, ALONG WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, ADVOCATE THEIR BERLIN POSITION VIA-A-VIS THE SOVIET UNION WITH FIRMNESS, BUT THEY AVOID GIVING THE SOVIET UNION A CAUSE FOR CONTINUING AND EXTENDING A CAMPAIGN BECAUSE OF THE INTERPRETATION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE QA, A CAMPAIGN THAT CAN ONLY HAVE NEGATIVE REPERCUSSIONS UPON THE OVER-ALL SITUATION OF THE CITY. WITH THESE POINTS OF VIEW IN MIND, THE ADVICE WAS GIVEN TO REFRAIN AT THIS TIME FROM MEETINGS IN BERLIN OF THE COUNCIL OF ELDERS.

5. ADDITIONAL QUESTION BY DEPUTY KUNZ: MR. MINISTER OF STATE, DOES THIS MEAN THAT I MAY PROCEED FROM THE ASSUMPTION THAT THESE QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN CLARIFIED UNEQUIVOCALLY BETWEEN THE THREE WESTERN POWERS AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT?

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REPLY (WISCHNEWSKI): I ASK YOU TO UNDERSTAND WHEN I SAY THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS A VERY CLEAR POSITION AS TO EVERY QUESTION YOU MENTIONED HERE. ON THE OTHER HAND, I ASK YOU TO UNDERSTAND AS WELL THAT I

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CAN PROVIDE NO INFORMATION ON MATTERS THAT ARE
CONFIDENTIALLY DISCUSSED IN THE BONN GROUP.

6. ADDITIONAL QUESTION BY A DEPUTY JAEGER (WANGEN),
CDU/CSU: I HAVE ONLY THE FOLLOWING QUESTION, MR.
MINISTER OF STATE, DID THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COORDINATE

THE REPLY YOU HAVE GIVEN US IN THIS CASE, WHICH
AFTER ALL CONSTITUTES A CERTAIN EXCEPTION, WITH THE
PRESIDIUM AND COUNCIL OF ELDERS OF THE GERMAN BUNDESTAG?

REPLY (WISCHNEWSKI): I PROCEED FROM THE ASSUMPTION
THAT THE PERSONS IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE AND HERE IN THE
BUNDESHAUS WHO WORKED ON THE REPLY TO THIS QUESTION
HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH ONE ANOTHER. END UNCLASSIFIED
TEXT.

7. EMBASSY COMMENT (CONFIDENTIAL): IN OUR VIEW,
WISCHNEWSKI HANDLED THE MATTER WELL AND HOPEFULLY HAS
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LAI D IT TO REST AS A POTENTIAL ELECTION ISSUE. IT
WOULD HAVE BEEN TOO MUCH TO EXPECT HIM TO SAY DIRECTLY
THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ALSO OPPOSED ROCKING THE
BOAT BY PRESSING FOR A COUNCIL OF ELDERS MEETING IN
BERLIN, BUT THE MESSAGE IS THERE FOR THOSE MOST LIKELY
TO WANT TO PRESS THE MATTER. SO FAR AS WE KNOW, BERLIN
CDU DEPUTY WOHLRABE HAS FOUND NO ALLIES IN HIS EFFORT
TO MAKE IT AN ISSUE. NOW THAT ALLIED MISGIVINGS HAVE
BEEN PUBLICIZED, WE WOULD EXPECT OTHER OPPOSITION
FIGURES TO STEER CLEAR; THEIR INTEREST IN FORCING THE
GOVERNMENT'S HAND ON THE
ISSUE WOULD BE COUNTERBALANCED BY A DESIRE NOT TO
CREATE DISSENSION BETWEEN THE FRG AND THE THREE ALLIES.
END COMMENT.
HILLENBRAND

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